

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 24595

E.O. GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, CD

SUBJECT: FRANCO-CHANIAN RELATIONS ON DOWNTURN

REF: FORT LAMY 1314

1. RIGHT WING PARISIAN DAILY "L'AUORE" IN SEPTEMBER 18 EDITION REPORTS CHADIAN REQUEST FOR FRENCH EVACUATION OF MILITARY BASE AT FORT LAMY IS IMMINENT. "L'AUORE CLAIMS THAT SEVERAL WEEKS BEFORE POMPIDOU'S DEPARTURE FOR CHINA HE LEARNED OF TOMBALBAYE'S INTENTION TO ASK FOR FRENCH WITHDRAWAL. POMPIDOU REPORTEDLY WAS FURIOUS BUT DECIDED TO SEND COOPERATION SECRETARY OF STATE DENIAU TO MAKE ANOTHER EFFORT TO SAVE RELATIONSHIP. ACCORDING TO STORY, DENIAU WAS TREATED IN PARTICULARLY "ABRUPT AND BRUTAL" FASHION AND ON HIS RETURN BRIEFED QUAI OFFICIALS TO EFFECT THAT FRANCE WAS READY TO LEAVE CHAD ON CONDITION THAT A CLIMATE OF "MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING" BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES WAS PRESERVED.

2. "L'AUORE" STORY, WHICH MAY EXAGGERATE SITUATION RESULTING FROM DENIAU VISIT (REPORTED REFTTEL), PROBABLY CONTAINS ELEMENTS OF TRUTH, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO POMPIDOU'S OWN ATTITUDE. FROM SEVERAL ELYSEE AND QUAI SOURCES WE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN TOLD OF SERIOUS AND GROWING FRENCH DISENCHANTMENT WITH
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SITUATION IN CHAD. ELYSEE PRESS SPOKESMAN ROUGAGNOU AND

SENIOR FOCCART STAFF MEMBER DUSSERE HAVE TOLD EMBOFFS THAT PRESIDENT POMPIDOU WAS PERSONALLY EXTREMELY UNHAPPY WITH TOMBALBAYE'S PERFORMANCE AS PRESIDENT AND WITH HIS STRIDENT CRITICISM OF FRENCH POLICY. DUSSERE, WITH WHOM EMBOFF TALKED SEPTEMBER 17, SAID THA ELYSEE HAD CONCLUDED TOMBALBAYE WAS "MAD." WHEN EMBOFF OBSERVED THAT FRENCH SUBSIDIES HAD BEEN ONE OF PRINCIPAL SUPPORTS OF CHADIAN ECONOMY, DUSSERE IMMEDIATELY RESPONDED THAT MOMENT HAD COME WHEN FRENCH WOULD HAVE TO CUT BACK SUBSTANTIALLY ON AID TO CHAD.

3. COMMENT: SIGNS OF DISENCHANTMENT WITH TOMBALBYE AND ECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT OF HIS GOVERNMENT ARE SO UNIVERSAL IN FRENCH GOVERNMENT CIRCLES, THAT IT SEEMS VERY POSSIBLE MAJOR CRISIS IS BUILDING UP, ACCOMPANIED BY AID CUT BACK AND PERHAPS FRENCH TROOP WITHDRAWAL. FRENCH PROBABLY HAVE NO ILLUSION THAT CUTBACK WILL BRING TOMBALBAYE TO HIS SENSES, BUT THEY SEEM LESS AND LESS WILLING TO POUR MONEY DOWN WHAT THEY INCREASINGLY BELIEVE IS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RATHOLE. IRWIN

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